

The Journal of

**THROSSEL
HOLE
PRIORY**

New Year Issue

Throssel Hole Priory Journal

The Throssel Hole Priory Journal is published bimonthly with six issues per year. The subscription rate is £3.25 per annum. Please send your subscription to:-

Throssel Hole Priory
Carrshield
Nr. Hexham
Northumberland NE47 8AL.

January 1978.

c Throssel Hole Priory 1978

The Prior and the editor are not responsible for the individual views of the writers contributing to the Journal.

Throssel Hole Priory is affiliated with the Reformed Soto Zen Church, under the direction of Rev. Jiyu Kennett, Roshi, Shasta Abbey, Mt. Shasta, California 96067, U.S.A. Phone (916)-926-4208.

New Year Thoughts

Homyo Brazier

A new year . A new beginning in my training.
A new day. A new instant of life. Flowing on. Always flowing. Find the truth now. Discard past mistakes. Accept present ones. Detach myself from the thought of those to come. Know that nothing stands in the way. Opportunity succeeds opportunity. I appreciate this new time again and again. Always renewing.

The forms of our lives are infinitely varied, constantly changing, truly ungraspable. Life kaleidoscopic always uniting us with the truth. Here at Throssel we are small Buddhist family, a branch of that greater family which embraces all those who attempt, however haltingly, to live within the Buddha Dharma. This is a time to think of this our true family. True children of Buddha, everyone different in manner and appearance yet all united in going for refuge to the Three Treasures. How fortunate we are in having this way of finding peace together right here in the midst of this drifting wandering world. This refuge is the heart of training. Although each person brings problems, attachment, ambitions and delusions, there is no reason for coming here except to take this refuge. There is no point in coming except to make a new start.

On entering this family we are advised not to seek uselessly for the truth. We are not here in order to be somewhere else. We are not here in order to be something other than what we already are. Nor are we here in order to change other people. Search the heart. Give expression to the Three Jewels. Changes come naturally bringing new opportunities for training. Do not long for them. Do not back off from them. Awaken. Do not dream. We are here to study what already lies within the treasure house, to do it now, to see the highest truth, to know the immaculacy of all things, to bring out the harmony latent in each relationship. Training is giving expression to these precious things in simple ways. Sorrow

springs simply from our neglect of them. We have these treasures. We need look no further than this.

In this family, if we work hard, if we give all our energy to training, we can go beyond all differences and find peace and joy anew every day. I am glad to belong to this family. I am glad to have such an opportunity to learn to express these truths. I am glad to inherit such riches, to have such ancestors, such brothers and sisters. A family is a thing of the heart, not a matter of calculation. It is a thing which is freely given, to be accepted, not something which is achieved or bought. To practice the Dharma has nothing to do with deciding what this or that organization can do for me. Nor is the refuge we seek something to inflate the ego. It is necessary only to abandon the walls within which we habitually hide and imprison ourselves. Even if habitual selfishness has turned the place where I live into a fortified bunker I must know that this place is the treasure house itself. The task is not to come out fighting but simply to cherish the riches which lie all around.

This family is open to all who truly seek refuge in the Three Treasures. When we do so this is our true home. Now, in this new year, I wish peace and happiness to all who have trained here in the past, all those who have left good memories and whose training has enriched my life. I wish joy and fulfilment to all my friends who are now on this path. I wish you all success. And for the future, for those who will come here, those who will train with us and who may enlighten the world, I welcome and open my heart to them all. In this way we will have a true family and a true refuge. All our deepest wishes will be fulfilled and this will be a good year.

* * *

British Monks at Shasta

A very busy six months have passed since the welcoming committee, headed by Rōshi, took us from the San Francisco airport to the Berkeley Priory, where we had the wonderful opportunity of joining in two Kessei ceremonies. It was good to see Zen in action and to meet some of the Abbey monks. After resting and seeing some of the sights of San Francisco and the Bay area, we drove to Shasta Abbey to be greeted with great kindness and warmth.

Ordinations: On September 6th Jane Harris was given the name Hōun Myohō, and on September 16th Graham Passmore, Sara Elbert and David Kennaway became Hōun Chushin, Hōun Meian and Hōun Saidō respectively. We are all deeply grateful to Rōshi for making us members of the Sangha.

Certificates: On October 1st Daishin Morgan received his Parish Priest certificate after being tested by a number of the most senior monks of Shasta Abbey. We all wish to congratulate him.

Transmission: On the night of December 5th Jimyo Krasner received the Transmission from Rōshi Jiyu Kennett, and became a senior monk.

Chief Junior: Jimyo Krasner successfully completed her Hossen, the Chief Junior testing ceremony, on December 11th. Jimyo took as her theme, "Do not continue the rolling of the wheel in the wrong direction by dwelling on the past or fearing the future; live now without evil."¹ She commenced her 100-day term on December 17th. Her Benji is Saido Kennaway, who will be the next Chief Junior.

Work: The projects we have been involved in have been varied and interesting.

¹ Commentary on The Kyojūkaimon, by Rōshi Jiyu-Kennett.

Daishin was first assigned to the kitchen which he ran when the Chief Cook (another Daishin!) was out of the temple. He is at present head of the gift shop and would like everyone to know that a dock strike caused a delay in book orders being dispatched.

Jimyo went from garden assistant to the gift shop. Then she worked in the sewing and laundry rooms, and her latest assignment is that of animal department monk. (A good grounding for the new Chief Junior.)

Myohō has retained her initial position as an animal department monk. She helps milk and generally care for the fifty goats which provide all of the Abbey's dairy produce.

Chūshin was a garden monk, but is now assistant treasurer and assistant infirmarian.

Meian, who spent the first four months as a goat monk, has had her ability as a typist discovered and is now an administrative assistant and helping in the guest department, as well as being Rōshi's fifth Jiisha.

Saidō started as a kitchen assistant and became an assistant cook, and has learned much about nutrition which will be valuable when we return to Throssel. He is now the Benji, or Chief Junior's assistant.

Building: Last year a magnificent 50-foot square Zendo was completed, and now there is an adjoining bathhouse which, along with the rest of the community, we helped to build.

General News: The summer was very eventful. The unaccustomed heat made us appreciate occasional dips in a mountain lake and provided a constant threat from forest fires. As the weather cooled we held a very successful Jūkai, and all the lay people were able to stand on the huge altar for the Recognition Ceremony. This was followed by Segaki, when we processed through the Abbey cemetery for a ceremony at the stone altar, after burning all our past karma and that of the dead in a bonfire.

Rōshi has decided to make a movie of the Buddhist fable "Monkey", and we have already started filming, with Chūshin in the title role, Daishin as one of the two Tin Men, and Myohō as costume designer and make-up lady.

More British Monks: We would like to welcome four new members of the British community to study at Shasta. Rev. Jitsuyu Evans, Rev. Giko Kublicki, Roy Jilley and Mary Kublicki will be coming to join us after the New Year. Rōshi is very pleased that there will soon be a well-trained British Sangha who can return to Throssel and create a strong monastic community.

We are all very grateful to Rōshi for giving us the opportunity to train at the Abbey, but we have not forgotten all our friends in Britain and would like to send you all our very best wishes for Christmas and the New Year.

Visits from Japanese Sōtō Zen Priests: A copy of Rōshi's book "How to Grow a Lotus Blossom" was sent to Iwamoto Zenji, the Chief Abbot of Sōjiji, the temple in Japan where Rōshi studied. The book was extremely well received, and subsequently we have had a number of visits from Japanese Sōtō Zen priests. Rev. Matsunaga, a priest of the Los Angeles temple, which is the headquarters of the Sōtō Zen sect in America, brought with him as a present for Rōshi a gold and silk rakhusu of a variety that is only given as a sign of honour and spiritual recognition. It is made of blue-black silk and embroidered in gold with the text of the Hannyashingyo (Scripture of Great Wisdom). While he was here Rev. Matsunaga arranged for a visit by Harada Rōshi, formerly a lecturer at Eihei-ji, now Bishop of his home region in Japan. Harada Rōshi came for two days in November and gave a number of lectures to the whole community. A transcript of these lectures will appear in the Throssel Hole Journal. Rev. Harada was obviously delighted

with his visit, and hailed Shasta virtually as the Eihei-ji of America. He too was very impressed with Rōshi's book, and asked us to send a copy to one of his English-speaking disciples. Rev. Harada gave Rōshi a number of presents including a tape recording of a typical day at Sōjiji. Rōshi also received from Iwamoto Zenji the complete published works of Koho Zenji, which it is hoped will be made available in translation at some time in the future. Along with one of his own works and some lovely books on Sōjiji, he sent the news of his retirement as Chief Abbot of Sōjiji and the announcement that he will return to his own temple.

Soon after these visits and gifts, we received a copy of the official magazine of Eihei-ji which has just devoted considerable space to a description of Shasta Abbey, commenting positively on the state of Zen training in America and recognizing Rōshi as one of the three Sōtō Zen Rōshis of the second or higher type in this country.

Turning Doubt Into Faith

The response to Roshi's recent letter to the British congregation has been very encouraging. By far the majority of those who wrote wish to have the priory continue, would very much like to have a priest come over from the Abbey and are prepared to give financial support and visit whenever possible.

Revs. Isan and Ando Sacco are planning to come over in May of next year to run Throssel, provided that the conditions in England remain favourable. By then Rev. Isan will have completed his five years of training at Shasta and since he has also experienced kensho and been trained to teach thereafter he will be a Roshi in his own right and not a proxy as were Mark Strathern and Michael Hughes. Roshi does not want to send anyone over until they are fully qualified. Rev. Ando, his wife, is a full priest, but she has not yet completed her five years of training.

I know from what I have seen since I have been at Shasta that Roshi has great love for England and wants to continue giving the teaching as long as there are people there who truly want to study Buddhism.

One of the most important lessons to learn if you could follow a Master's teaching is that when doubt and confusion arise not to let this stop you from training, but learn to stay still inside and treat it like anything else that arises in meditation. Probably every trainee in existence experiences doubt. It is by means of dealing with doubt that faith can grow. The fact that doubt arises is not a problem, it becomes one if you decide to act on it.

We have the choice to act out of faith or out of doubt. "Faith is not what you do when you believe but what you do when you doubt." The faith is grown if the choice is made to just continue training with the events of daily life, doing our zazen and not letting the ideas and opinions of ourselves and others get in the way.

It is equally important not to suppress doubt. If something disturbs us deeply enough there can be a tendency to hide it from ourselves. To do this we have to close off a part of ourselves and so meditation is blocked and we cannot find any peace until we can look at it. When we do look at it, more often than not we find that the most frightening thing was our own imaginings. Once squarely faced the doubt has a chance to evaporate, and our training gets stronger as we realize that what really matters is not what the rest of the world gets up to but that we do our own training.

Faith in the beginning is a delicate thing and the actions of others can help it grow or damage it, but really the choice is ours. If we really take a look at ourselves then we know that there is a great deal to be done and this in itself provides the impetus to train, and the more we train the more the faith grows.

I know from my own experience that doubt usually takes hold when my training has slipped and it takes hold because I allow it to. Act on faith not doubt and you will find the courage to trust the teacher completely. Once this trust is growing you will be able to receive the teaching on deeper and deeper levels and leave behind the misery of the judgmental mind. The teacher stands in the place of the Lord of the House, and in learning to trust him you can learn to trust the Lord.

I feel very grateful for the opportunity to be

here. The sincerity of the training and the very obvious love that is here inspires and warms my heart more than I know how to express. Since being here I have come to understand what Dōgen was writing of when he quoted his Master Nyōjō Zenji in the Shūryo-shingi, "Within this hall we must love each other and be deeply grateful for the opportunity of possessing a compassionate mind which enables us to be parents, relatives, teachers and wise priests; because of this compassionate mind our countenances will for ever show tenderness and our lives will for ever be blissful.... How fortunate it is that we are together. How fortunate it is that we in this hall have been able to make the acquaintance of those who, in former lives, performed good works and have thus become the treasures of the priesthood." (Zen Is Eternal Life by Rōshi Jiyu Kennett.)

Daishin Morgan.

This means learning how to deal with living. Everyone has pet hates or problems which crop up time and time again. Like those days when we feel "down". Instead of seeking temporary relief in the usual distractions we should know that we do not have to be "victims of circumstance". And so we come to Buddhism which teaches the freedom of stillness.

We learn compassion. Being still and listening. Not fighting the koan but letting it simmer, looking at the pain, anger etc. but not acting upon it. We then turn our awareness inwards; what others do is their business, they can only upset us if we let them, by clinging to fantasy and wanting the emotions to be real so that we can justify defending this thing we call individuality, or self. It is not helpful for us to judge or criticise ourselves or others, we only have to put all our energy and faith into the awareness which comes from being still. And so we begin to learn about responsibility.

We have to care deeply about every moment of our lives, because every action, every cause has an effect (karma) upon us which is inescapable. And so it's not so much us deciding to be responsible as realising that we are. This is a great gift and is the means by which we can know real freedom from painful old habits and ideas.

This is not easy to do (although it is easier than not doing it) and takes months and years of training. Always we must have faith in our own Buddha Nature and in our ability to realise it fully. Mistakes will be made, we should not waste precious time with worry or guilt, just do Sange, make good use of the mistake by learning from it and keep going. Simple faith can bridge many a troublesome gap.

Slowly some consistency will come into our lives as we begin to be more aware of the stillness and how it is untouched by the emotions or the intellect. That stillness, the Lord of the House, which is the perfection of Zen, sits within all our actions and is the gift of eternal life. My teacher, Rōshi Jiyu-Kennett, has said that we are not the Lord of the House but that there is nothing in us which is not of the Lord. We must allow for, and love, our humanity. Being human is not a penance. Yes we can laugh, love, cry or be angry, but if we let these things be controlling factors in our lives then we do ourselves a great disservice.

By always trying to let our actions come from the Heart, from the stillness, we can learn more about the law of cause and effect. We will begin to see why certain things always hurt us, but accepting what we see will not always be easy. We usually treat others as we treat ourselves; that which we dislike in others is often the one thing about ourselves which we have turned a blind eye to. We must be open to that thing and compassionate towards ourselves. We must stand in the middle of that stillness, for it is the human in us which makes mistakes and never the Lord of the House. No matter what mess we are in or what we have done or how many times we tell ourselves we can't change, that stillness will always sit within us, offering us a minute-by-minute chance to turn around and change our lives. When we accept the offering then we know that it is really we who sit within the stillness. It is so much bigger than us, but we must not think that so long as we believe it's there what we do is insignificant. We are the means by which the Truth is expressed. A house may have electricity but it's still a dark place to live without lightbulbs.

It is those mistakes, those times when we say "Oh I wish I didn't have to feel so awful," that

are our guidelines. Love those times but do not repeat them. They are signposts showing us when we are not being still. They are great teachers. By being still during these times we notice that before the usual set of conditioned reactions there is always a split second of clarity. When we see this we realise that those old emotions are only harmful when we identify with them. Sit beneath them, throw yourself into your faith (that's what it's for) and they fade away, leaving an ever-increasing stillness and the certain knowledge that we do not have to be tied up in knots of tension.

Within each of us is a great warmth and joy, a vibrant stillness. We need only believe in it and want to know it with every fibre of our being. When we are prepared to say to the Master, "I know nothing except that I love you, I want nothing except to serve you," then the way to true peace and living fully is wide open. Don't be put off by thinking you can't do it, get going with the knowledge that you can try.

Myohō Harris.

Carrot Bread

Recycle your leftovers and make them into bread! See it as training and it's giving the best use to everything you have. By not discriminating, what was just leftovers is transformed into what's left over to make the next meal.

Next time you make a carrot and raisin salad use what's left over in this carrot bread. It's a moist, slightly heavy sweet bread that's quite good on its own or with cheese. It has to be eaten fairly quickly as quick breads only keep for two or three days but this shouldn't be a problem!

Ingredients:

Wholewheat flour	6 oz. + an extra tablespoon
White flour	Just over 7 oz.
Cinnamon	2 teaspoons
Baking soda	Just under 1 oz. (sift before adding to break up lumps)
Soy flour	Just over 1 oz. (use whole-wheat or white if not available)
Walnuts	3 oz. (break them up a bit. These are nice but not essential.)
Raisins	4 oz.
Eggs	2 small, slightly beaten
Milk	5½ fluid oz. (about ¼ pint)
Oil	12½ fluid oz. (over ½ pint - it has quite a lot of oil)
Vanilla	1 fluid oz.
Brown sugar or honey	6 to 9 oz. weight
Grated carrots	12 oz.

Note: There are 20 fluid ounces in one English pint. The amounts are a bit strange as the recipe is converted from American cups. This makes one 3 pound loaf or two smaller loaves.

Method:

1. Mix the flours, cinnamon, baking soda, raisins, and walnuts in one bowl.
2. Beat the eggs in a separate bowl, then blend in the milk, oil, vanilla, sugar and carrots one at a time in that order.
3. Add the second bowl of ingredients to the first and mix gently.
4. Turn the mix into a large bread tin and bake in a preheated oven at 325°F for 1 hour or until a knife pushed in the top comes out clean, not sticky from uncooked dough.
5. Turn out of tin and allow to cool.
Enjoy!

Saidō Kennaway.

News and Events

Following a British Lotus: Reverend Jiyu Kennett Roshi wishes all trainees in UK a very happy 1978 and has asked us to publish the following information. Kyosei Hughes has returned to her husband Michael in London and will no longer act as proxy for Roshi Jiyu Kennett, Mission Society, Shasta Abbey or as prioress of Throssel Hole Priory. For the present time she will renounce her discipleship. The six British monks who went to Shasta last June continue to do well. Three more are expected at Shasta this month and another in the spring. The Reverend Saccos are looking forward to coming to England in May. In the Meantime Throssel Hole Priory is being effectively run by Homyo Brazier Roshi Jiyu Kennett's proxy. Roshi will continue to keep a close interest in the progress of British trainees in the future and to this end has agreed to become a trustee of Throssel Hole Priory.

Wudo-no-hai: On 4th Dec Sergio Cortesi officially entered the meditation hall as a postulant, we welcome him and wish him every success in his training.

Gifts: We would like to thank Tony Lucas and Michael Taylor for honey, flour and rice, Mrs. Bell for cake, Gordon Bell for newspapers, Peter Smith for shrubs for the garden, Joe Heavenstone for curtains and various items of clothing, Roy Jilley for coffee, the Clayton family for nuts, Chris Roberts for a christmas cake, chocolate and other delights for the kitchen, Cortesi family for childrens clothing, christmas cookies, chocolate and sweets, all those who have sent contributions and their best wishes to us for the christmas season.

Rosie: We are looking for a home (preferably in a town) for Rosie our two year old mongrel dog. Rosie is very affectionate but as yet not well trained and there is some danger that she may chase sheep. Would anyone who would offer her a home and would train her please contact the priory.

Work: Some members of the priory community may need to seek work in the Hexham/Newcastle area in the near future. If anyone knows of any jobs available please let us know.

Useful Items: The Priory could use newspapers and green shield stamps, plastic sheeting, canvas.

Buddha Birthday: The priory community celebrated the Buddhas Birth on Dec 25th. We, the followers of our Great Master Shakyamuni, bow in gratitude to him for his goodness and compassion as we celebrate his birthday. We pray that his halo, which is the Light of the Dharma, will illuminate the darkness of the delusion of those beings of this world who have not yet heard his Name. We pray that all beings may be saved and thus prosper for all eternity. We pray that the seed of Buddhahood will bud and blossom into the Flower of Enlightenment so that its beauty may fill the universe.

Standing order form

Please pay Barclays Bank (20-40-09), Hexham, Northumberland the sum of £ on the day of 19... and at intervals of thereafter until cancelled, for the credit of Throssel Hole Priory (A/c No. 20879010).

Signed Date

Name & address of your bank:

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Subscriptions and Donations: Journal subscription for six monthly issues is £3.25 or £2.75 if paid by standing order. Please complete the donation slip. If you wish to make a regular contribution to any of the Priory's funds and you normally pay income tax on your earnings there is considerable benefit to the Priory if you will also complete the Covenanted Subscription form. Henceforth the Journal will be sent automatically to all those contributing £5 or more per annum to any of the Priory's funds by standing order or covenant.

Funds: Throssel Hole Priory is organized legally as a registered charitable trust. For practical purposes our funds are divided into three parts.

The Scholarship fund has been established to contribute to the expenses of monks resident at the Priory or travelling between monasteries. At present contributions to this fund are invited primarily to make it possible for one or more senior priests to come here from Shasta Abbey this next summer. Subsequently we should like to be able to help support those English monks who have travelled to Shasta in order that they may complete their training as priests there. The income of this fund is entirely from donations.

The Priory fund: meets all the day to day costs of the monastery and of running retreats and derives its main income from the rent paid by residents and visitors. Donations to this fund enable us to maintain the Priory in good order and purchase new items of equipment when necessary.

The Land and Buildings fund: came into being through the generosity of those who have contributed to the purchase of the Priory from its former owner and to the cost of the meditation hall which is now in course of construction. Many people have also loaned money to the Priory for these purposes and donations to this fund will help us to complete the building work and repay these debts when they fall due.

Donation Slip

I enclose cheque / postal order / cash / standing order
form made up as follows: Journal subscription

Priory fund

Scholarship fund

Building fund

TOTAL ENCLOSED £

Name

Address

.....

Deed of Covenant

I

of

hereby covenant that for the period of seven years from

this date or during my life whichever shall be the shorter

I will pay annually to Throssel Hole Priory such a sum

as will after deduction of Income Tax at the standard rate

for the time being in force, leave a net sum of

such sum, together with any income tax deducted from and

recoverable in respect thereof, to be applied to the general

purposes of the said Throssel Hole Priory and to be

paid out of my general fund of taxed income so that I shall

receive no personal or private benefit from the said sum

or any part thereof or any tax recovered in respect thereof

In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand this

.....day of 19 ..

Signature

Signed and delivered

by the above named in the presence of

Witness

Address

Occupation

Weekend Retreats:

January 21 - 22
February 4 - 5
18 - 19
March 4 - 5

Week Retreat:

March 25 - April 1

Visitors: Weekend retreats are introductory and are open both to those with or without previous experiences in meditation. Week retreats are open only to those who have previously visited the Priory. Please write for an application form. Guests should send a cheque in advance with their application form for retreats, and those staying for extended periods of time must pay in advance every month. No cash refunds will be given unless the application is rejected or the retreat is booked up. Any balance may be applied to future retreats, visits, publications, benches or other Priory sales. Visitors are welcome to the Priory at any time by arrangement and visits need not be confined solely to retreat periods.

Costs: are determined by the number of days in any one calendar month spent at the Priory whether consecutive or not. Weekend retreats are charged as three days (£9) and include arrival anytime Friday to departure anytime Monday. Early departure does not qualify for a refund. Please arrange to stay the full weekend if at all possible.

1 - 6 days	£ 3 per day
7 -10 days	£ 20
10 -20 days	£ 2 per day
Monthly	£ 40

Priory Sales: Meditation benches and zafus £4 each.
Poster size ink drawings on rice paper, various designs £1 each.

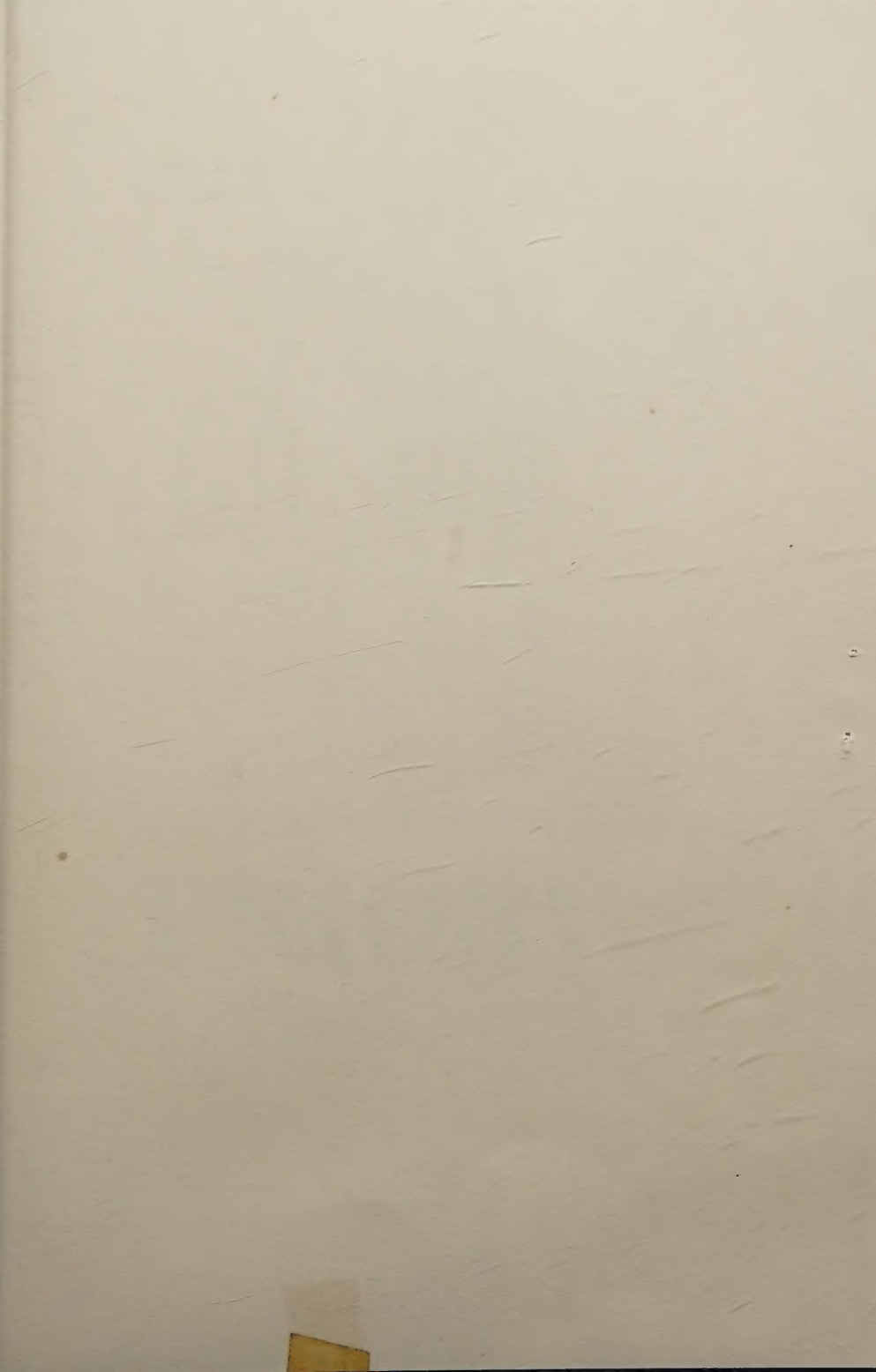
Publications available: How to Grow a Lotus Blossom and The Wild White Goose vol I both by Rev. Jiyu Kennett will be available shortly.

Zen is Eternal Life by Rev. Jiyu Kennett Roshi £3.25

Zen Meditation , a booklet especially designed for beginners, £1.25.

Becoming a Buddhist , a special issue of the Shasta Abbey Journal, 80p.

All the material appearing in this new year issue of the Journal has been written by British monks training here and at Shasta Abbey. The article "A Note on Transmission and Priestly Ranks" by Daizui MacPhillamy will appear in a subsequent issue as will translations of lectures given by Harada Roshi on his recent visit to Shasta Abbey.





Throssel Hole Priory

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